



B A T M A N
LEGENDS OF THE
DARK KNIGHT

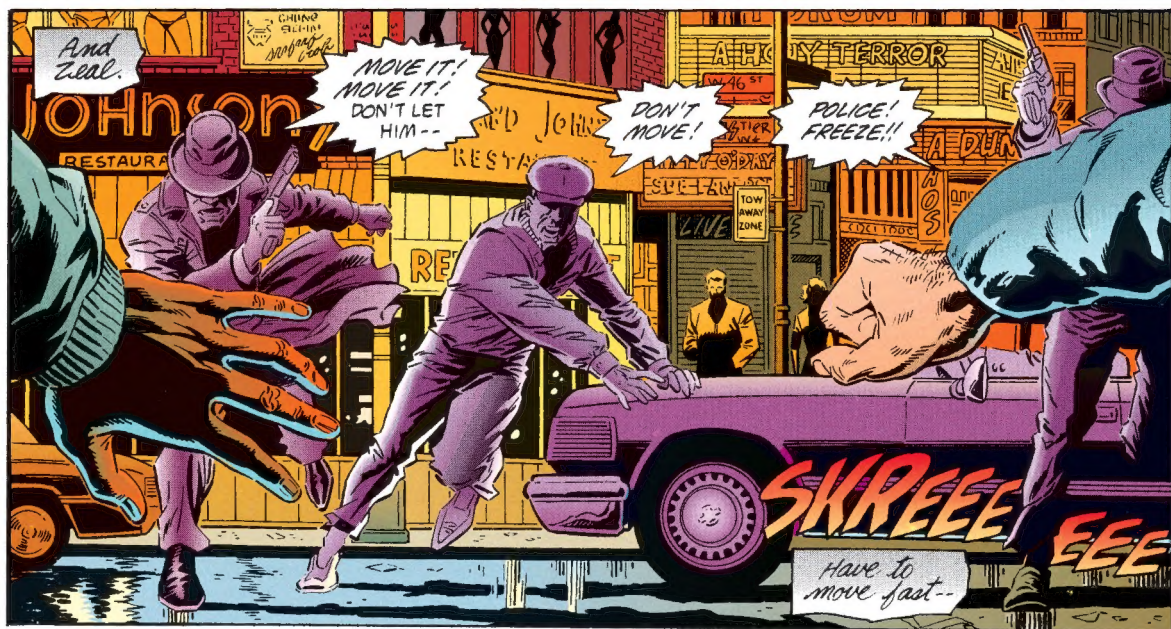
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150 CAN 185



P · R · E · Y

DOUG MOENCH · PAUL GULACY · TERRY AUSTIN
PART ONE OF FIVE

Gulacy



If I'm going
to scoop the
little man out
of their net.

PREY

XXX PART ONE XXX

HO-LEE...

IT'S
HIM!

IT'S THAT
MAN-BAT
AGAIN!

BUT
WHERE'S
HE--

URG-K-K!

HE'S TAKING
HIM UP
TOP THE
MARQUEE!

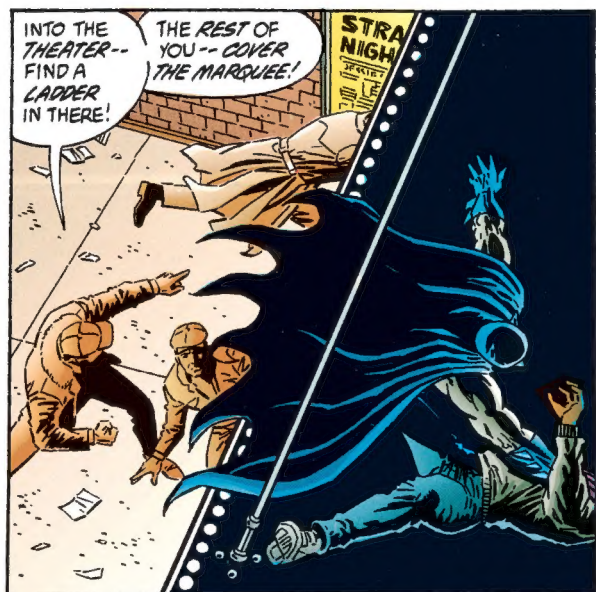
DOUG MOENCH • PAUL GULACY
WRITER PENCILLER

TERRY AUSTIN
INKER

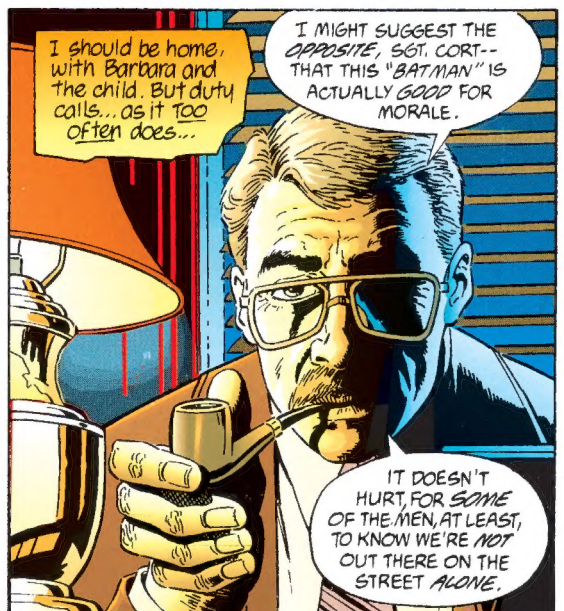
JOHN COSTANZA • STEVE CLIFF
LETTERER COLORIST

A DOOLEY/HELPER PRODUCTION

BATMAN CREATED BY BOB KANE









He casts a dark shadow, this Max Cort...

MAYBE FOR SOME OF THE WEAKER MEN, CAPTAIN, BUT REAL COPS HAVE PRIDE.

Not madness, exactly...



...but definitely obsession.

AND REAL COPS SHOULDN'T HAVE THAT PRIDE STRIPPED AWAY AND HAVE THEIR NOSES RUBBED IN IT BY SOME VIGILANTE WHO'S TWICE THE CRIMINAL. AS THE SCUM HE'S STEALING FROM US!

"STEALING" FROM US--?

YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN, CAPTAIN.



ACTUALLY, I'M AFRAID I *RAY*'D, SGT. CORT.

AND NOW, IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME, I'M LATE...

...FOR A TV SHOW, OF ALL THINGS.

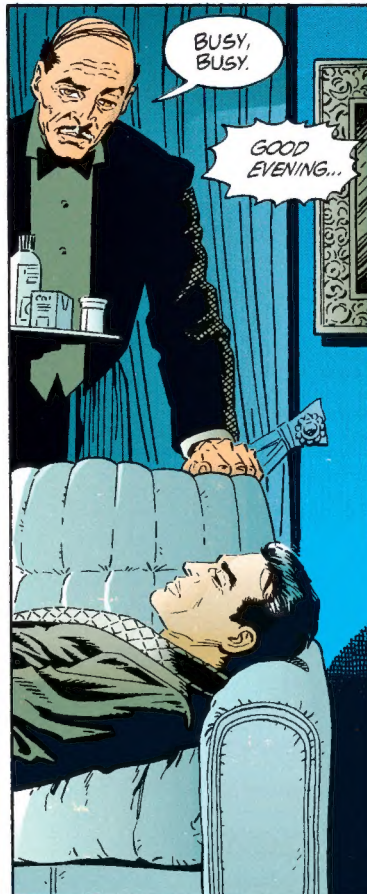
Hot lights, but no yawning allowed.



AND DID YOU RECEIVE YOUR "MINOR WOUND" BEFORE OR AFTER YOU, AH, WENT TO THE MOVIES, SIR?

--FROM GOTHAM, NIGHTTIME, WITH REPORTER JUD FELLOWS...

ABOUT AN HOUR BEFORE, ALFRED.



BUSY, BUSY.

GOOD EVENING...



TONIGHT'S TOPIC OF DISCUSSION IS: "THE BATMAN: SAVIOR OR SCOURGE?"

WITH ME HERE IN THE STUDIO ARE OUR GUESTS...



... GOTHAM MAYOR
WILSON KASS, POLICE
CAPTAIN JAMES GORDON,
AND PROMINENT PSYCHIATRIST
DR. HUGO STRANGE.

LET'S START WITH YOU, MR.
MAYOR. WHAT ARE YOUR FEELINGS
ABOUT THIS BIZARRE NEW BAT-
CLAD VIGILANTE?

WELL, JUD,
MY POSITION IS
FIRM AND
CLEAR...

A TV SHOW--the
LAST place a cop is
needed. Might as
well be in CHURCH.



ALTHOUGH THERE ARE THOSE
WHO PERCEIVE THIS FIGURE
AS A KIND OF DARK GORSEND
WHO FIGHTS FIRE WITH FIRE,
MY RESPONSIBILITY IS TO
PUT ALL THE FIRES OUT.

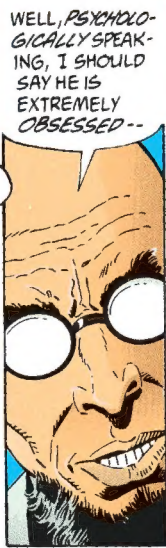
IN GOTHAM,
NOONE
IS ABOVE
THE LAW.



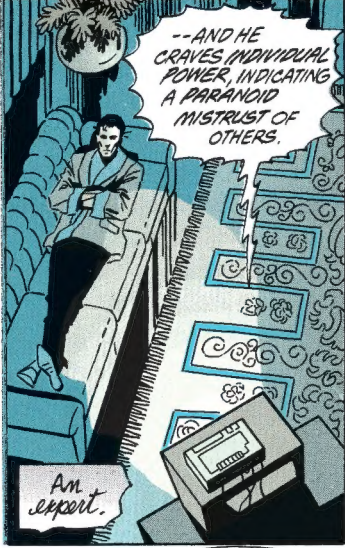
BESIDES, WHAT DO WE REALLY
KNOW ABOUT THIS SHADY
ENTITY--?

DR. STRANGE, PERHAPS
THAT FALLS INTO YOUR
AREA OF EXPERTISE.

WHAT DO WE KNOW
ABOUT THIS 'BATMAN'?

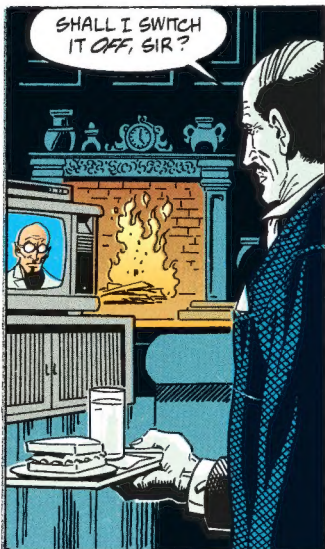


WELL, PSYCHOLO-
GICALLY SPEAK-
ING, I SHOULD
SAY HE IS
EXTREMELY
OBSESSED--



--AND HE
CRAVES INDIVIDUAL
POWER, INDICATING
A PARANOID
MISTRUST OF
OTHERS.

Am
sargent.



SHALL I SWITCH
IT OFF, SIR?



FREE ANALYSIS,
ALFRED? NO.

LET'S TAKE THE
OBSESSION
FIRST, DR.
STRANGE...



OBSESSED
WITH WHAT?

DRESSING UP
LIKE A BAT?
STOPPING
CRIMINALS?



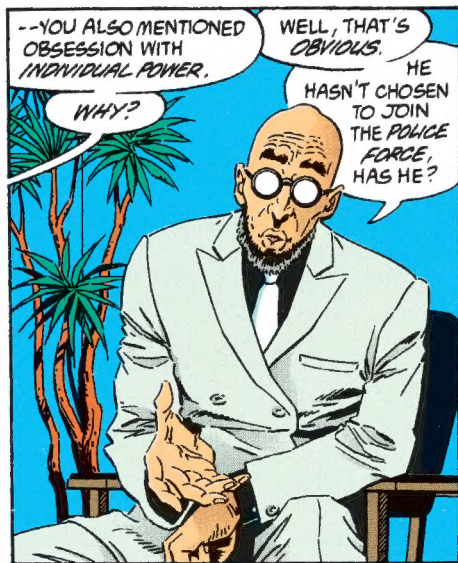
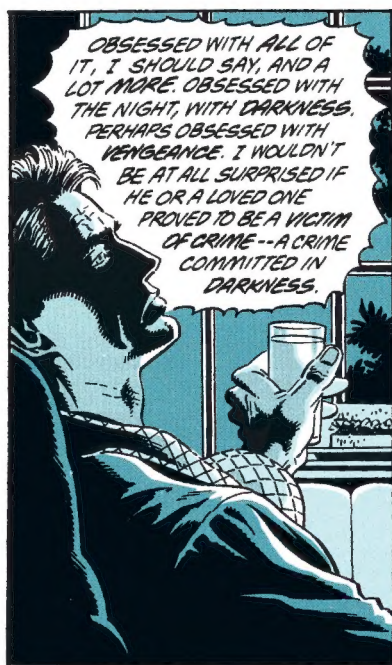
MAKING THE
POLICE APPEAR
FOOLISH AND
INEPT?

FORGIVE ME, CAPTAIN
GORDON, BUT MY
QUESTION WAS
ADDRESSED TO
DR. STRANGE.

HE DOES
NOT MAKE
THE POLICE
APPEAR--

OBSESSED
WITH WHAT,
DOCTOR?

His turf--
and he knows it
damned WELL.





THIS, OF COURSE, INDICATES BOTH SCHIZOPHRENIA AND A SPLIT PERSONALITY.



NO.



SIR--?



NOTHING.

HAVE YOU EVER CONSIDERED THAT HIS ANONYMITY IS UTILITARIAN AND NECESSARY?

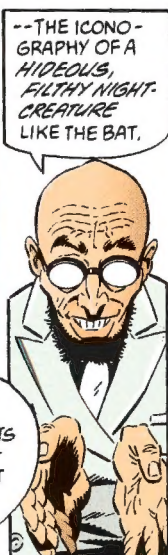


HE CAN'T DO WHAT HE DOES WITHOUT THE DISGUISE. HE COULDN'T OPERATE WITHOUT ANONYMITY. HE'D BE ARRESTED IMMEDIATELY. HE MIGHT SUFFER REPRISALS.

yes.



QUITE SO, CAPTAIN, BUT THE FORM OF HIS DISGUISE SUGGESTS ANYTHING BUT UTILITARIAN MOTIVE. JUST LOOK AT THE IMAGE HE'S CHOSEN --



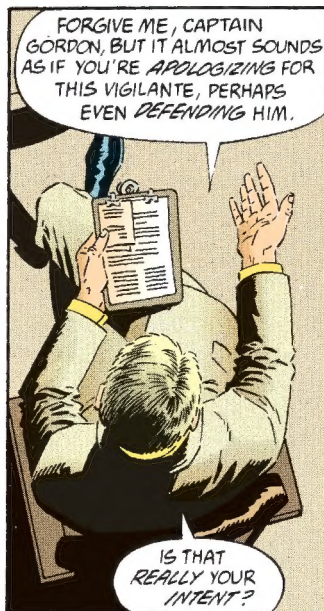
--THE ICONOGRAPHY OF A HIDEOUS, FILTHY NIGHT-CREATURE LIKE THE BAT,



CLEARLY, HE EXULTS IN THE DARK POWER OF THIS TERRIFYING APPARITION TO--

OH, FOR PITY'S SAKE!

HE JUST WANTS TO SCARE THE PANTS OFF CRIMINALS!



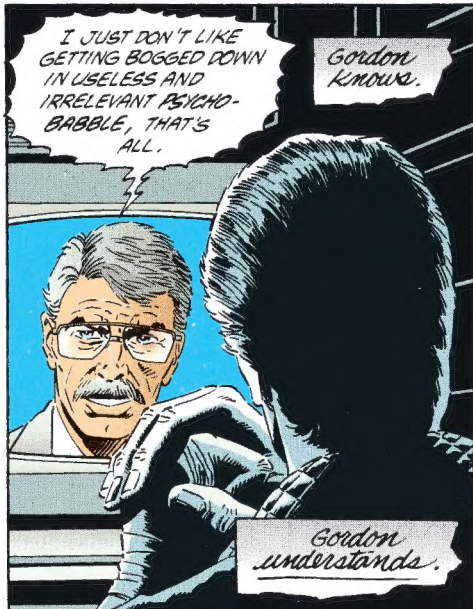
FORGIVE ME, CAPTAIN GORDON, BUT IT ALMOST SOUNDS AS IF YOU'RE APOLOGIZING FOR THIS VIGILANTE, PERHAPS EVEN DEFENDING HIM.

IS THAT REALLY YOUR INTENT?



WELL, I... NO, OF COURSE NOT.

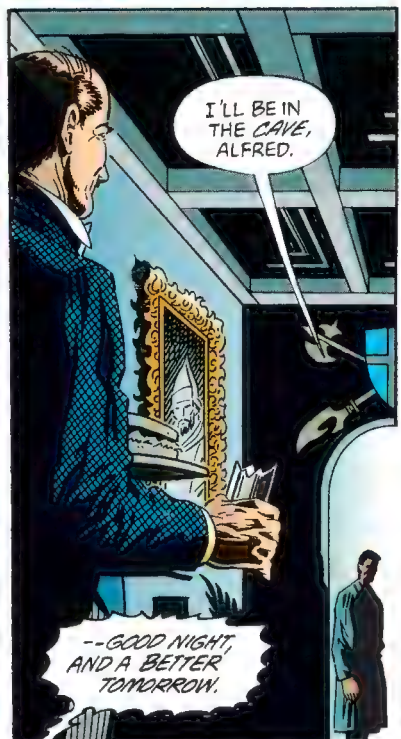
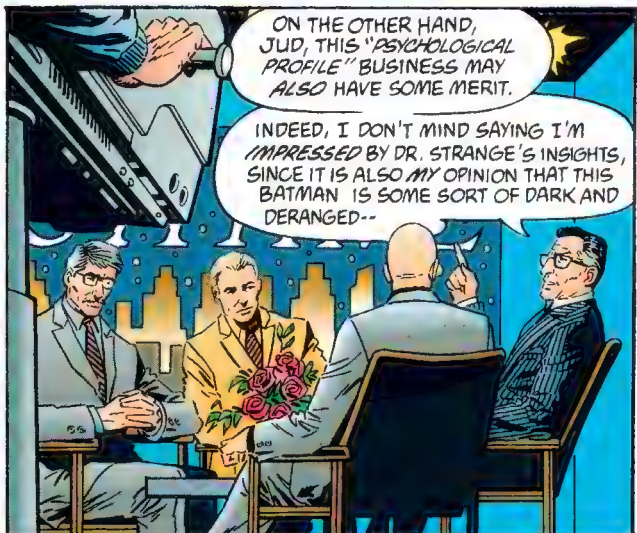
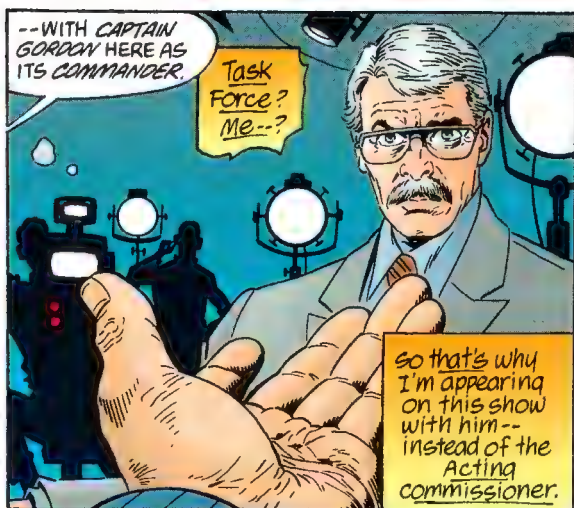
IF HE BREAKS LAWS, HE MUST BE BROUGHT TO JUSTICE... JUST LIKE... LIKE ANYONE ELSE...

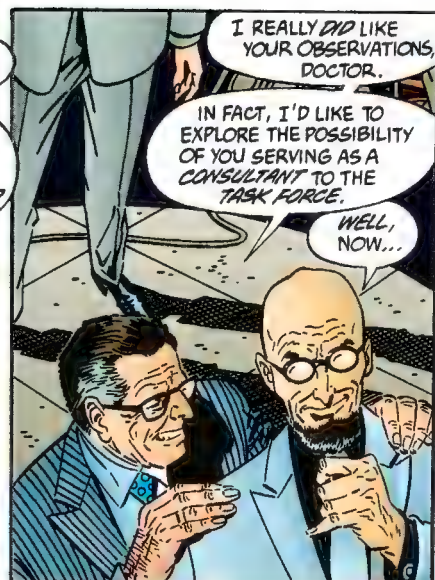


I JUST DON'T LIKE GETTING BOGGED DOWN IN USELESS AND IRRELEVANT PSYCHO-BABBLE, THAT'S ALL.

Gordon knows.

Gordon understands.





Strange is buying it-- eating it up-- and if he could figure out who the Batman might be...

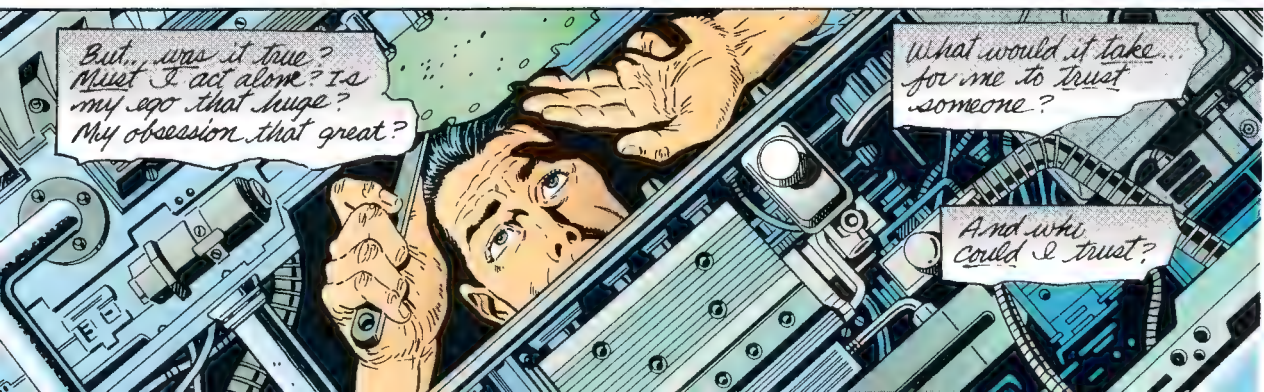
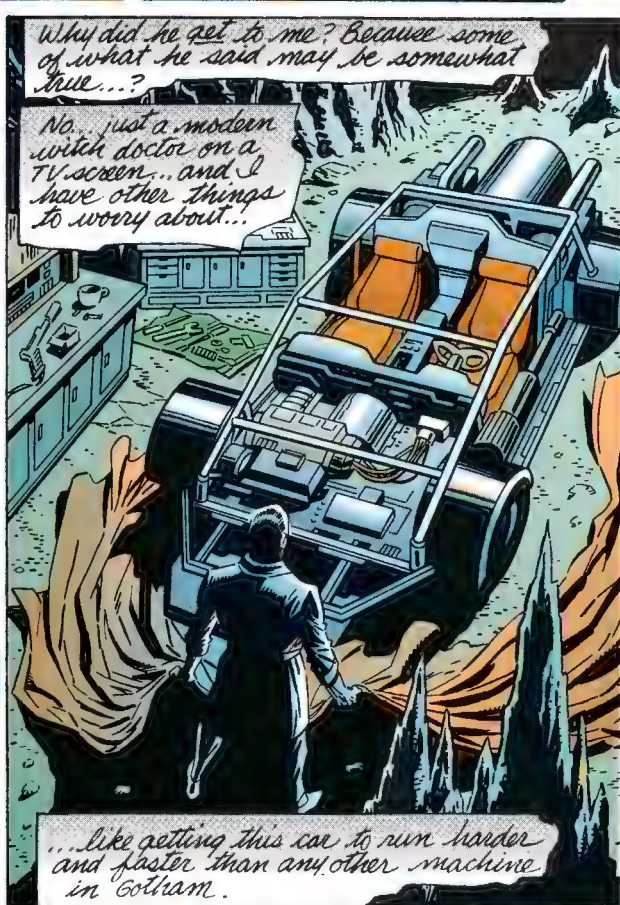
God.



He saved my child... saved me.

He's more effective than fifty cops on the street.

What do I do? Even if I could stop him... how could I?





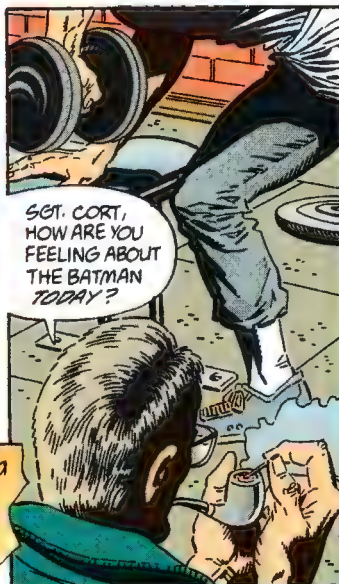
What I need is a man I can trust... but not have a lot of faith in.



A good man, but a man who's not all that good...



A straight cop, a clean cop, and a tough cop. A real go-getter, but one who doesn't necessarily get anywhere--dedicated, but strictly by-the-clumsy-book.



SET, CORT, HOW ARE YOU FEELING ABOUT THE BATMAN TODAY?



THE BATMAN? I WANNA BUST HIM, THAT'S HOW I FEEL!

THEN REPORT TO MY OFFICE IN FIVE MINUTES.

HUH--?

Yes, I think I've just found the perfect man...



YOU'RE BEING TAPPED, SGT. MAXWELL CORT, TO SERVE AS SECOND-IN-COMMAND ON THE NEW VIGILANTE TASK FORCE.

YEAH?

GREAT!

Blinded by a outful of personal hate...and none too bright in the first place.

THEN YOU FIND
THE CONSULTING
FEE *SATISFACTORY*,
DR. STRANGE?

TO THE CONTRARY,
MR. MAYOR, IT'S A
PROFOUND *INSULT*. BUT
I WHOLEHEARTEDLY
ACCEPT.

I... I
DON'T--

THE BATMAN, QUITE
FRANKLY, *FASCINATES* ME.
HIS CASE HISTORY, ONCE IT'S BEEN
LEARNED, COULD NO DOUBT FILL A
BOOK-- A BOOK ALL THE MORE
SPECTACULAR IF *I'M* THE ONE
WHO *WRITES* IT.

YOU'RE ACCEPTING THE
CONSULTANT'S JOB JUST
SO YOU CAN WRITE A *BOOK*?

NOT AT ALL,
MR. MAYOR.

WE WERE
DISCUSSING *FIGURES*,
AND THE POTENTIAL
FOR A BOOK IS
SIMPLY *ADDED*
INCENTIVE.

BUT THE BATMAN
HIMSELF-- HIS *PSYCHE*--
IS ALMOST AN *OBSESSION*
WITH ME.

I LOOK
UPON THIS
OPPORTUNITY AS A BUSMAN'S
HOLIDAY-- A *FASCINATING*,
STIMULATING EXERCISE.

FURTHERMORE, BEING
CHOSEN OUT OF ALL THE
PSYCHOANALYSTS IN GOTHAM
WILL HARDLY DAMAGE MY
REPUTATION OR
NAME RECOGNITION.

WELL THEN,
UH, WELCOME
ABOARD.

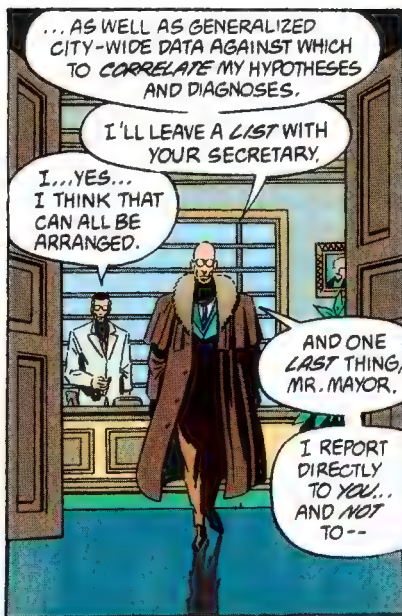
NOW, I REALIZE
YOU AND CAPTAIN GORDON
MAY NOT SEE EYE TO
EYE, BUT HE'S A
GOOD MAN.

IF YOU COULD
JUST *MEET* WITH
HIM TO DISCUSS
YOUR THEORIES--

DIAGNOSES,
MR. MAYOR, *NOT*
THEORIES.

AND BEFORE I
VENTURE ANY *FURTHER*
DEDUCTIONS, I MUST
FIRST INSIST ON *FULL*
ACCESS TO ALL *POLICE*
FILES--

-- EVERYTHING KNOWN
ABOUT THE VIGILANTE'S
TACTICS, METHODS, AND
TIMES AND PLACES OF
ACTIVITY...



... AS WELL AS GENERALIZED CITY-WIDE DATA AGAINST WHICH TO CORRELATE MY HYPOTHESES AND DIAGNOSES.

I'LL LEAVE A LIST WITH YOUR SECRETARY.

I...YES... I THINK THAT CAN ALL BE ARRANGED.

AND ONE LAST THING, MR. MAYOR.

I REPORT DIRECTLY TO YOU... AND NOT TO --



"--GORDON--"

--WANT YOU TO PREPARE A LIST OF TEN PLAINCLOTHES OFFICERS FOR MY APPROVAL, SGT. CORT.

THAT'S IT? THAT'S ALL YOU WANT ME TO DO?

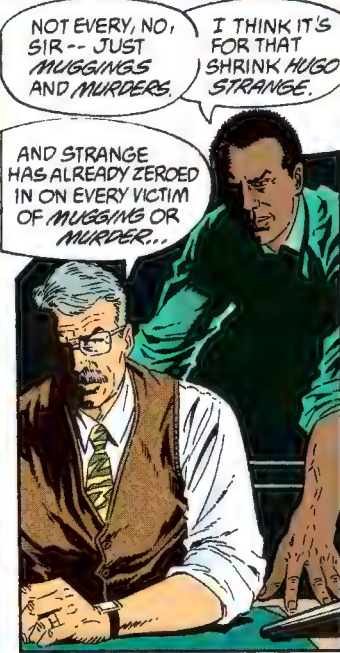
A TASK FORCE CAN'T DO MUCH OF ANYTHINGS, MAX, UNTIL IT'S BEEN FORMED, NOW CAN IT?

ALL RIGHT, YOU'LL GET YOUR LIST.



THE MAYOR'S OFFICE WANTS EVERYTHING ON THE BAT-MAN, CAPTAIN, AND A LIST OF GOTHAM CRIME VICTIMS.

YOU MEAN EVERY VICTIM OF EVERY CRIME IN--



NOT EVERY, NO, SIR -- JUST MUGGINGS AND MURDERS.

I THINK IT'S FOR THAT SHRINK HUGO STRANGE.

AND STRANGE HAS ALREADY ZEROED IN ON EVERY VICTIM OF MUGGINGS OR MURDER...



YES, SIR.

HMMM...



EVERY VICTIM IN THE LAST FIVE YEARS.

AH.

At least he's underestimated the extent of the Batman's obsession-- a lifetime obsession.

THEY CAN TELL STRANGE HE'LL HAVE IT BY TOMORROW.

And he's also underestimated the time necessary to prepare. In a mere five years, no man could become what the Batman is.



AND DON'T FORGET EVERYTHING ON THE BAT-VIGILANTE, CAPTAIN--ALL NINETEEN ALLEGED SIGHTINGS TO DATE, INCLUDING LAST NIGHT.

Everything, yes... all the facts, but nothing of my suspicions...

Dear God, how have I come to this time and place?

And in the end, if I'm not above the law... is he?



SIR, YOU SAID YOU PLANNED TO "GO FISHING."

I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT LIKE TO KNOW...

IT'S DARK NOW.

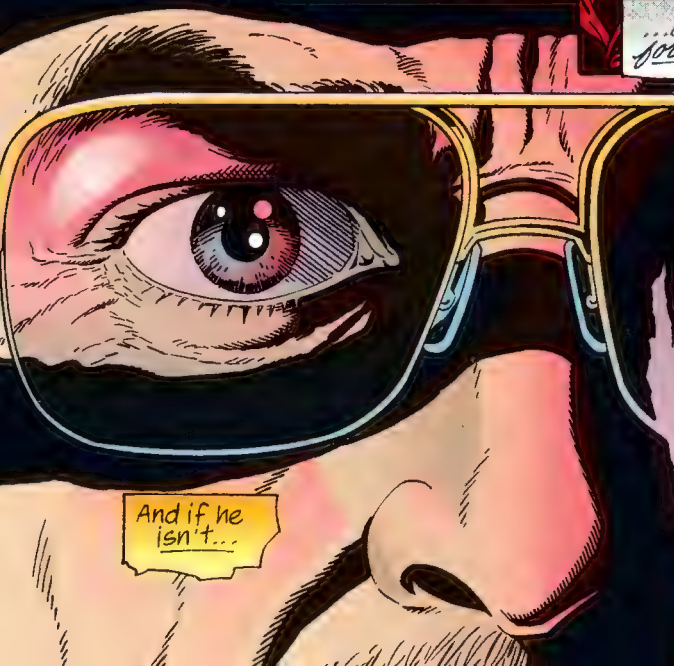
Dark...



YES, ALFRED...



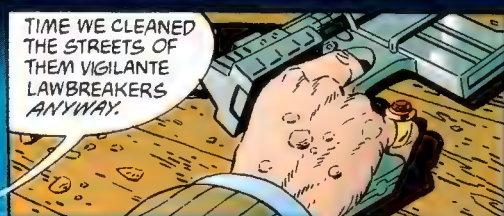
...dark forever.

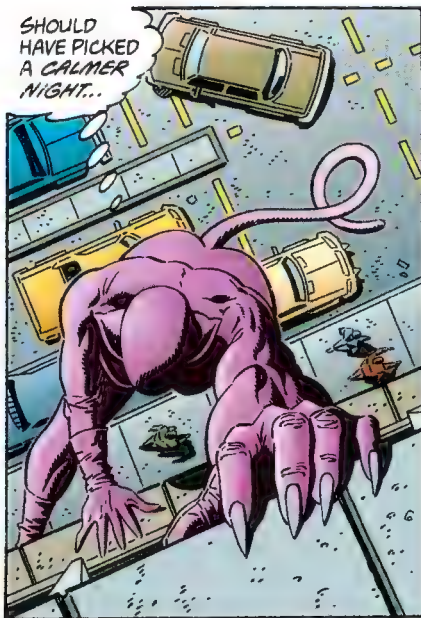


And if he isn't...

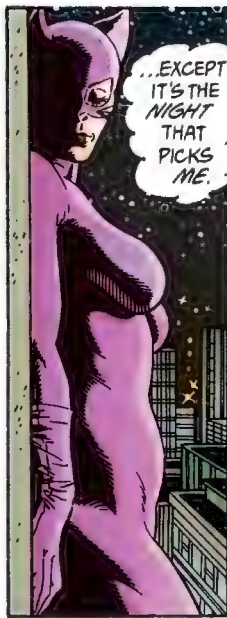


...then what is he?





SHOULD HAVE PICKED A CALMER NIGHT...



...EXCEPT IT'S THE NIGHT THAT PICKS ME.



YEAH, BUT WHAT ABOUT THE COPS, FISH? WHAT IF THAT PUNK DEALER TALKED TO THEM, TOO?

THE COPS ARE IN OUR POCKETS.

NOT THIS NEW GUY--NOT GORDON.



SO HE'S NEW MERCHANDISE...

SO PAY PREMIUM PRICE.



I'M SAYIN' HE AIN'T FOR SALE, FISH-- WON'T TAKE A DIME OR A DOLLAR.

AN' HE SCREENS HIS MEN.

THERE'S GUYS LIKE THIS REAL HARDCASE MAX CORT-- VERY AMBITIOUS, AN' HE PLAYS FOR KEEPS.



WHERE'S MAX CORT? HE WAS SUPPOSED TO HAVE THAT LIST ON MY DESK BY FIVE.

HE, UH, JUST LEFT, CAPTAIN GORDON-- SAID SOMETHING ABOUT WANTING TO MAKE SURE OF EVERY NAME ON THE LIST...



"...WANTING TO TEST THEM..."

ALL RIGHT, THIS IS A DRY RUN THAT MAY GET WET.

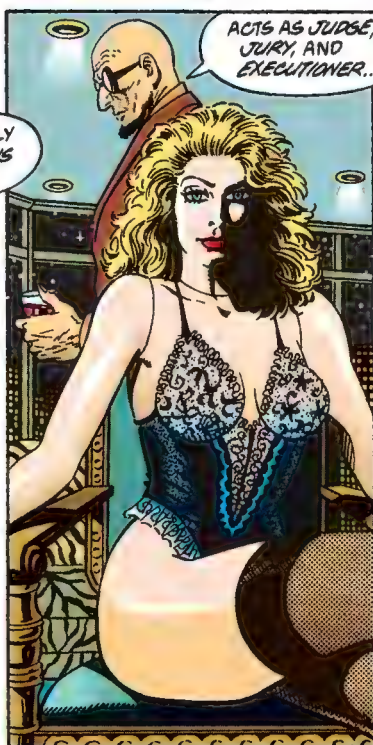
THREE UN-MARKED CARS WILL GET US TO THE THEATER NICE AND QUIET.

REMEMBER, BOYS-- THIS IS ONLY A DRESS REHEARSAL--BUT PLAY IT LIKE OPENING NIGHT.



HE'S FASCINATING, PLAYS BY NONE OF THE RULES, ACTING WHEN HE WANTS AND HOW HE WANTS.

CLEARLY DISDAINS AUTHORITY.



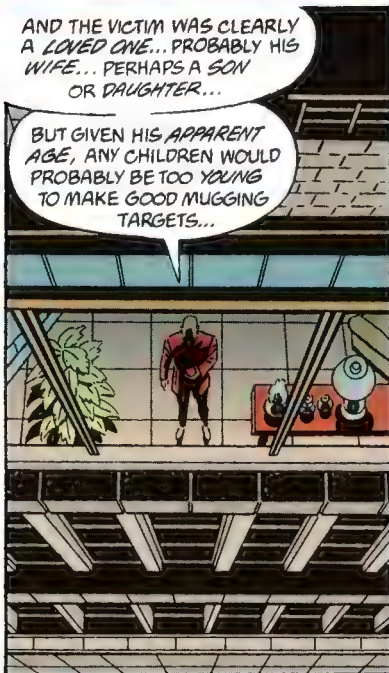
ACTS AS JUDGE, JURY, AND EXECUTIONER...



EXCEPT HE NEVER KILLS, NEVER EXECUTES... EVEN SEEMS TO DELIBERATELY AVOID KILLING.

SO HE'S PROBABLY SOMEONE RELATED TO A MURDER VICTIM, AND NOT HIMSELF A MERE MUGGING VICTIM.

OR PERHAPS... YES... PERHAPS A MUGGING THAT ESCALATED TO MURDER...



AND THE VICTIM WAS CLEARLY A LOVED ONE... PROBABLY HIS WIFE... PERHAPS A SON OR DAUGHTER...

BUT GIVEN HIS APPARENT AGE, ANY CHILDREN WOULD PROBABLY BE TOO YOUNG TO MAKE GOOD MUGGING TARGETS...



A WIFE, THEN...

...A DEARLY BELOVED WIFE...

... LOST TO THE NIGHT IN TERROR AND PAIN.



WHAT ELSE WOULD MAKE A MAN RISK DEATH TIME AND AGAIN WEARING SOMETHING LIKE THIS?

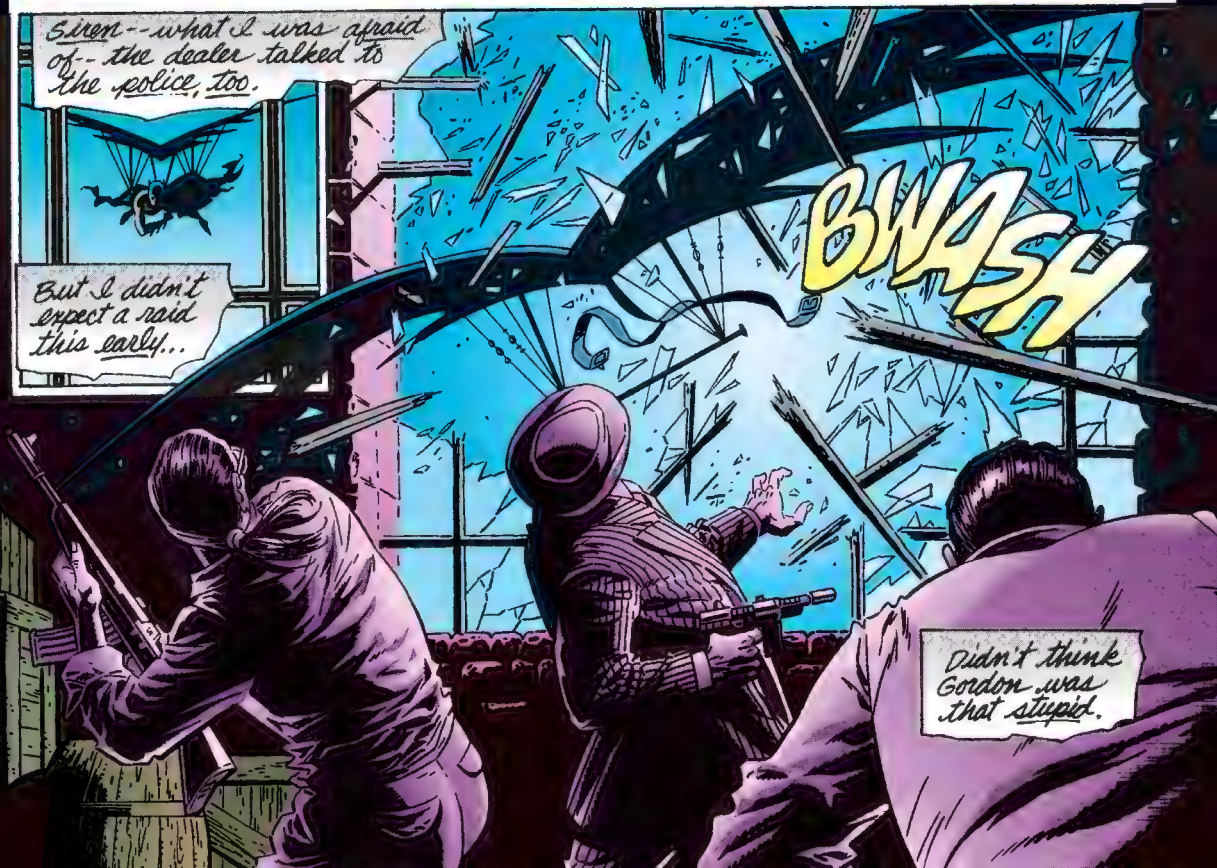
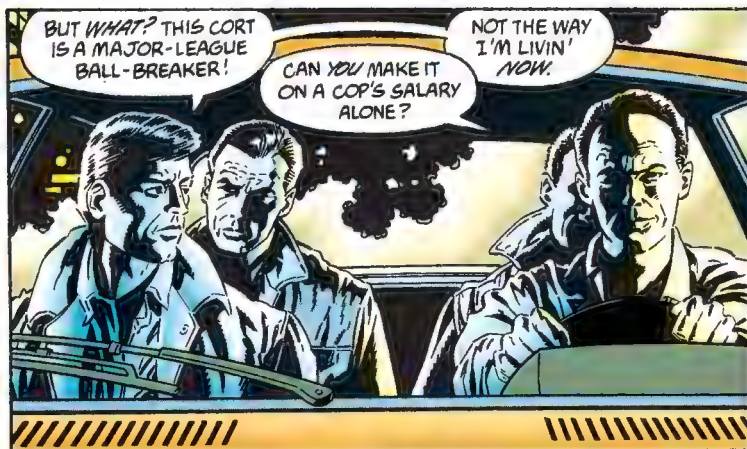


FASCINATING... ABSOLUTELY FASCINATING.

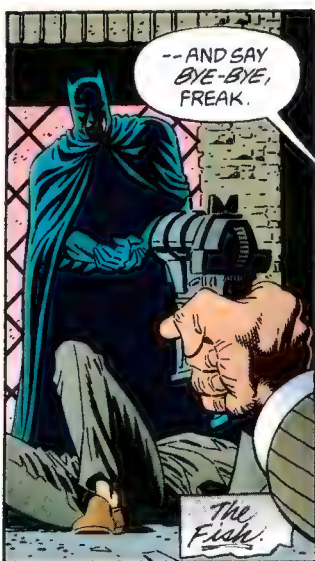
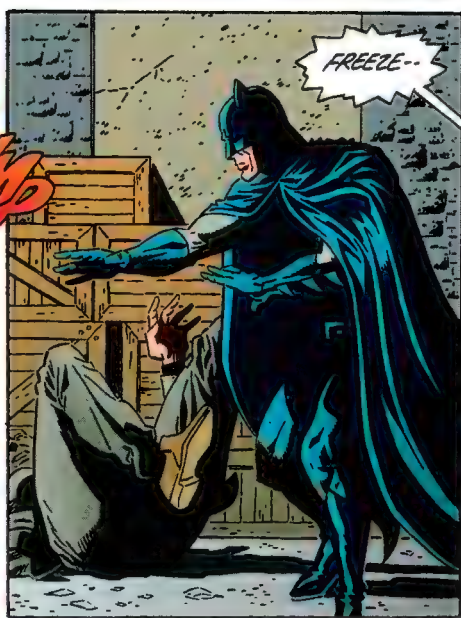
A MAMMAL... THAT FLIES.

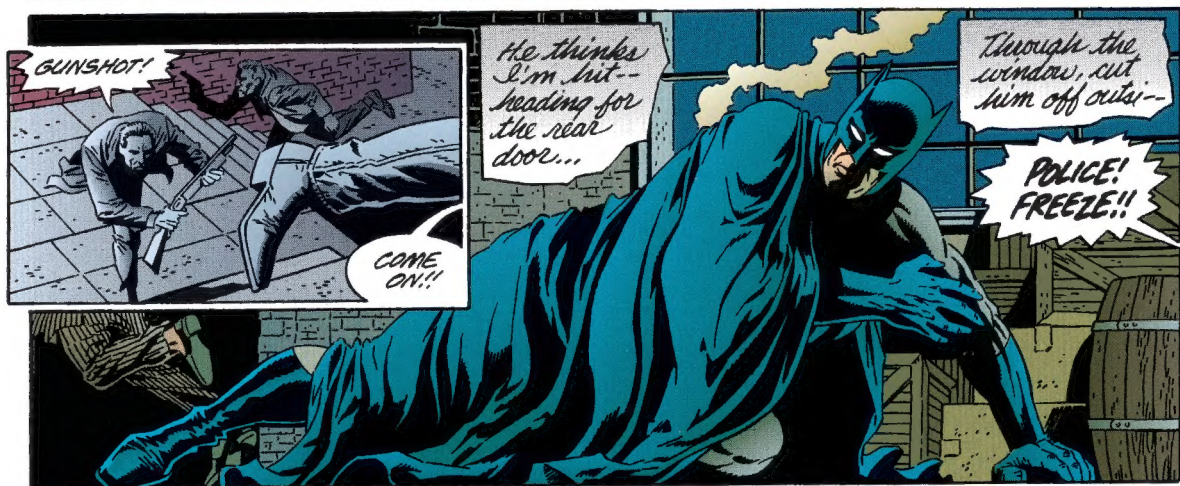
The warehouse is just ahead now.

Time to begin my descent...

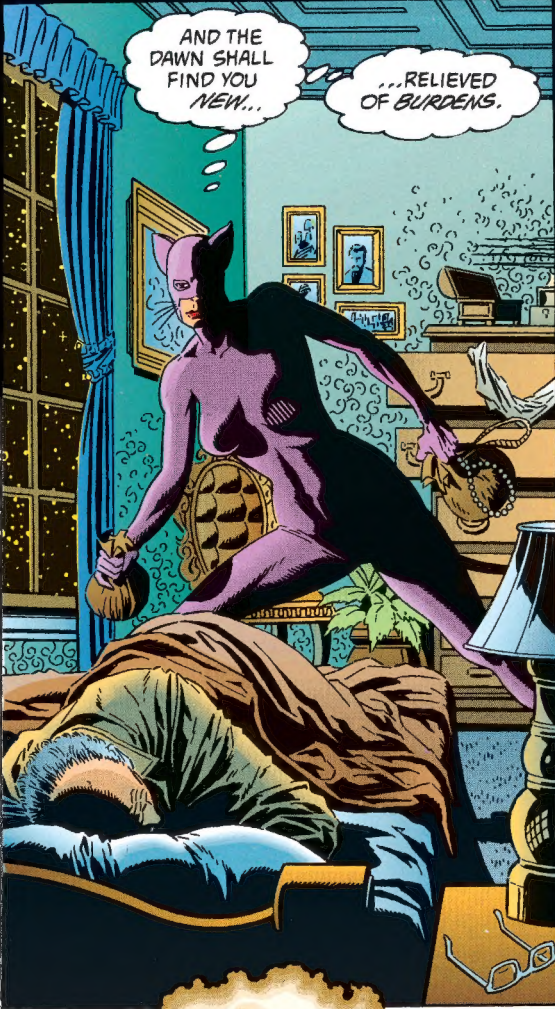








SHRIIIIIIIIIIIIP



AND THE DAWN SHALL FIND YOU NEW...

...RELIEVED OF BURDENS.



FAN OUT--AND BE CAREFUL! HE SOMETIMES USES WEAPONS.

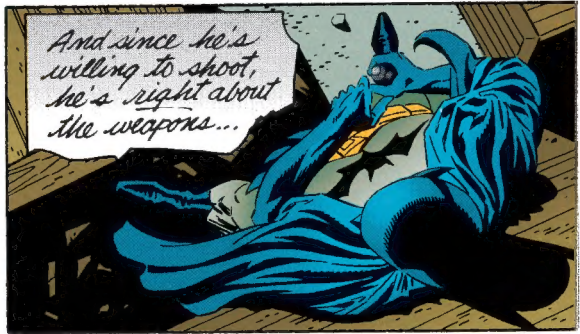
The one from last night.



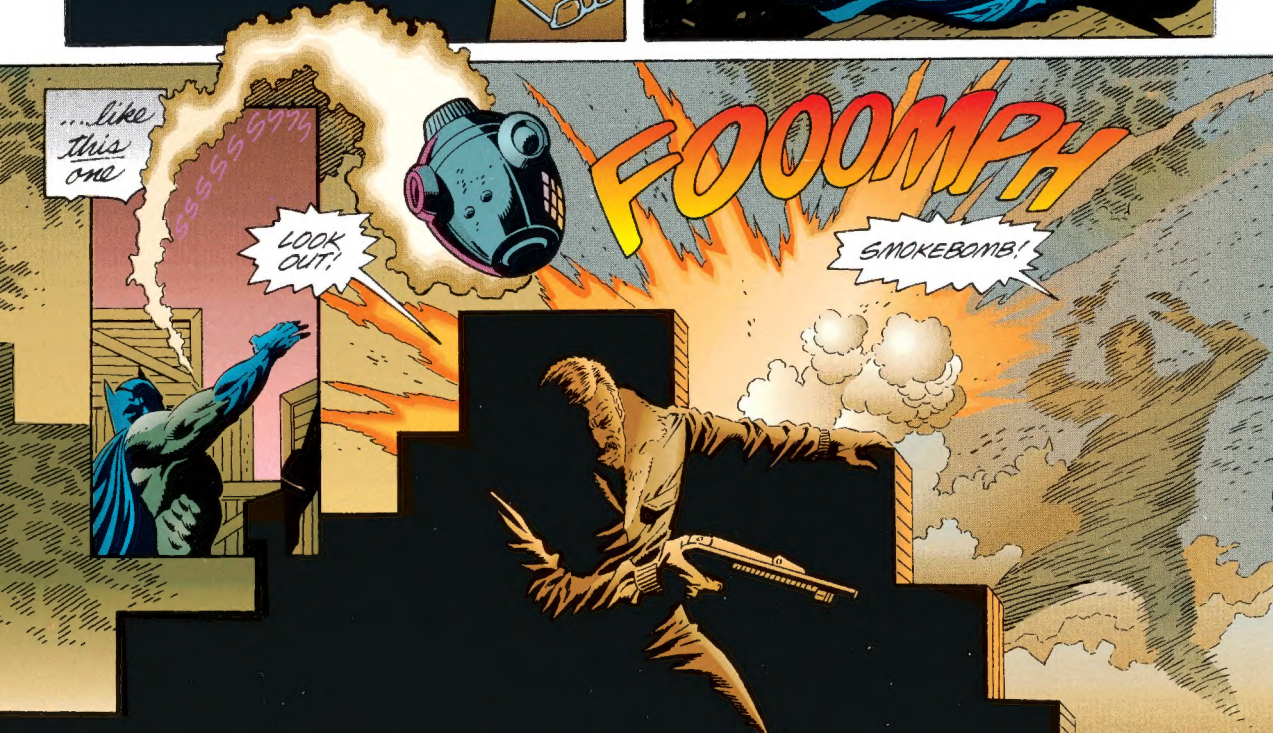
Stupid, yes, but not dumb.



That makes him dangerous.



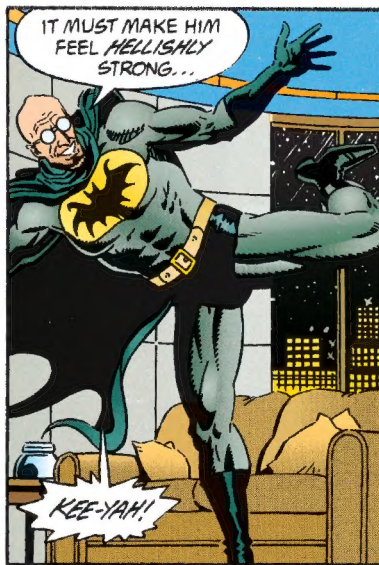
And since he's willing to shoot, he's right about the weapons...



...like this one

LOOK OUT!

SMOKEBOMB!





STAY DOWN, MAX! I'VE GOT HIM!

BRAM

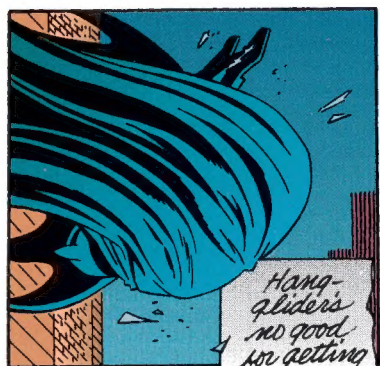


Like hell.



YEEEEAAHRR!

But still a mess.

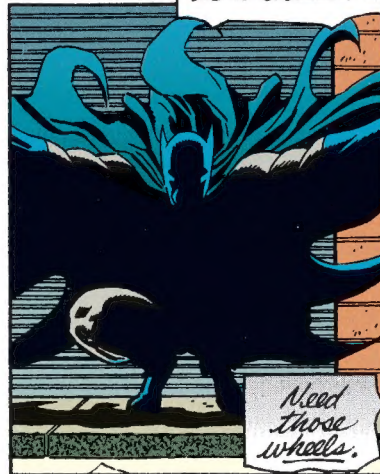


Hang-gliders no good for getting back.

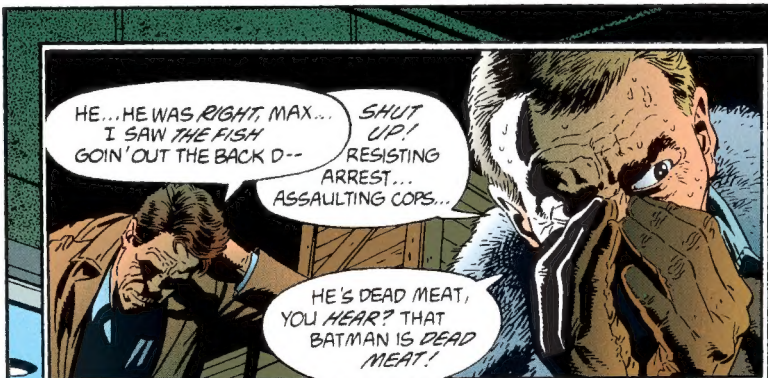


Wind's all wrong.

And walking is a waste.



Need those wheels.



HE... HE WAS RIGHT, MAX... I SAW THE FISH GOIN' OUT THE BACK D--

SHUT UP! RESISTING ARREST... ASSAULTING COPS...

HE'S DEAD MEAT, YOU HEAR? THAT BATMAN IS DEAD MEAT!



OH, HE'S A KILLER, THIS BATMAN... A KILLER WHO DOESN'T KILL...

...FREE TO RUN RAMPANT THROUGH THE DEEP, SECRET DARKNESS... MAKING RED LOVE TO THE NIGHT ITSELF...

OH, HOW I ENVY HIM.

OH, HOW I HATE HIM.

TO BE CONTINUED.